

INAUGURAL AUSTRALIAN PRIDE IN SPORT FESTIVAL TO HELP INCREASE LGBTQ+ PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

A new festival will focus on encouraging greater participation from LGBTQ+ people from all around the country in sport and is being delivered by leading LGBTQ+ sporting inclusion initiative, Pride in Sport.

The inaugural Australian Pride in Sport Festival will be delivered by Pride in Sport after receiving funding through the Australian Sports Commission's 'Play Well' participation grant. The groundbreaking initiative aims to increase the visibility, inclusivity, and participation of the LGBTQ+ community in sports across Australia.

Pride in Sport, which currently collaborates with over 100 sporting organisations nationwide, is dedicated to creating inclusive and welcoming environments for LGBTQ+ athletes and sports enthusiasts.

National Program Manager of Pride in Sport Beau Newell said: "The Australian Pride in Sport Festival is a significant milestone for the LGBTQ+ community and Australian sports. We are proud to create an inclusive platform where everyone can participate and celebrate diversity in sports. This funding from the Australian Sports Commission allows us to break down barriers and foster a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ athletes."

ACON CEO, Nicolas Parkhill AM, added: "ACON is dedicated to promoting inclusivity and diversity in all aspects of life, including sports. The Australian Pride in Sport Festival is a prime example of our commitment to creating safe and welcoming spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals. We are grateful for the support from the Australian Sports Commission and look forward to working together to make this festival a success."

The Australian Pride in Sport Festival will feature a variety of events and activities designed to engage the community and promote inclusivity. Inclusive sporting events will be organised across various disciplines, providing opportunities for participants to compete and showcase their talents in a supportive environment. Additionally, the festival will include introductory sessions aimed at encouraging new participants to try different sports, breaking down initial barriers to participation.

The festival will also deliver educational workshops on inclusivity in sports, equipping sporting bodies with the knowledge and skills to foster supportive environments. Collaborations with sporting bodies will be undertaken to review and enhance governance practices, ensuring they are inclusive and supportive of LGBTQ+ athletes.

An important aspect of the festival is the creation and distribution of the LGBTQ+ Participation in Sport Activation Guide. This resource will be developed in collaboration with partners and will support sporting organisations in engaging with the LGBTQ+ community, encouraging their participation in sports.

Australian Sports Commission CEO Kieren Perkins OAM said that the 'Play Well' grants program will play a crucial role in getting more Australians active in sport: "Creating great sporting environments is central to the nation's first Sport Participation Strategy and these projects will help us in our goal to transform sport participation ahead of and beyond Brisbane 2032 so that everyone feels welcome."

Newell added: "Pride in Sport acknowledges the strong partnership with the Australian Sports Commission and their commitment to increasing LGBTQ+ participation in sports. This collaboration underscores the importance of inclusivity and the shared goal of ensuring that everyone has a place in sports."

The project is scheduled to start on July 1, 2024, and run through June 30, 2025, with the festival itself planned to be held from January-March 2025. Further information and opportunities for sports organisations to get involved will be released in the coming months. For more information about the Australian Pride in Sport Festival and to stay updated on upcoming events, please visit our [website](#).

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